

through medical malpractice. Although proponents of H.R. 5 contend that the bill will limit frivolous lawsuits, I believe it will not do so; instead, this provision would arbitrarily cap meritorious claims of malpractice.

I ask my colleagues: if we trust our jury system to make decisions about life and death, I believe we must be able to trust that jury system to make decisions about money.

The increase in malpractice rates is a huge problem for doctors and hospitals, and that is why I wish this bill had been crafted with input from the leaders of both parties. At the least, I wish we had the benefit of an open rule that would allow real debate here on the floor. I will not support this bill because I think it fails to prevent frivolous lawsuits, fails to address the problems with the insurance industry, and fails to provide direct relief to communities that are struggling with access problems resulting from high malpractice rates.

**PROCLAMATION—POLICE-FIRE
MERGER PLATINUM ANNIVER-
SARY, KALAMAZOO DEPART-
MENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY**

HON. FRED UPTON

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 26, 2003

Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Kalamazoo Department of Public Safety. In 1983, it was determined that the combination of Kalamazoo police and fire services could serve as an effective method of providing more efficient and productive use of resources and employees. By cross-training personnel in both disciplines, the fire department's 164 firefighters and the police department's 219 law enforcement positions were consolidated into 383 multifunctional employees. This streamlining provided an excellent public safety service to the community while minimizing expenses. The Department of Public Safety has continued to evolve and improve since its inception—forming specialty units and services and using state of the art technology. Today, the department is the largest public safety organization in the country, with 315 highly trained and educated employees, and 2003 marks the 20th year of these combined police and fire services. I wish them many more years of continued success.

**RECOGNIZING MR. RONALD J.
RUFFENACH**

HON. CHET EDWARDS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 26, 2003

Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize Mr. Ronald J. Ruffennach for his many years of hard work, initiative and dedication to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and our Nation.

Ron has served the Corps for 30 years. His career encompasses working in the Pittsburgh District, Europe, and the Savannah District before transferring to the Southwestern Division's Fort Worth District Office in 1984. During his career, he has been called upon to accomplish many significant projects for the Corps of Engineers.

Ron is recognized as a leader and expert in the Corps' Public Affairs community. He has often been sought out to provide valuable public relations expertise during disaster recovery efforts. His expertise was invaluable in 1989 following Hurricane Hugo in South Carolina and the earthquake in northern California; in 1991, when he was assigned to the Defense Reconstruction Assistance Office during the Kuwait Recovery; and in 1993 when he was called to the Corps' Civil Works Forward Office following the Midwest flood event.

While in the Fort Worth District, Ron's unique and selfless dedication, as the Chief of Public Affairs and Legislative Affairs, is instrumental in building partnerships and achieving consensus on many important projects in the State of Texas, Louisiana, New Mexico, and beyond. My staff and I have personally called upon Ron to assist us in obtaining valuable assistance on projects in my district and throughout the State of Texas.

In the community, Ron has been a trusted and well-known leader and public servant. He is a 1993 graduate of Leadership Fort Worth, and an active member of the St. Vincent De Paul Catholic Church, where he is a Eucharistic Minister and an active member of the Men's Club. He served as a past president of the Boy's Select Soccer Club, past president of the Martin High School Soccer Booster Club and was active in local school board issues. He also was a regular volunteer at the Arlington night shelter.

Over the past few years, Ron has experienced serious health issues. However, not once during that period did Ron's commitment to the nation, the Corps of Engineers, and his family waiver.

I know that you, Mr. Chairman, and the other members of the subcommittee would like to join me in thanking Mr. Ronald J. Ruffennach for his long, dedicated, and faithful service to the nation, the Army, and to this committee. Thanks Ron.

**IN HONOR OF SAINT WENDELIN
PARISH**

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 26, 2003

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of the parish community of Saint Wendelin Church, as they celebrate one hundred years of healing and hope in Cleveland's Ohio City neighborhood. Throughout the past century, Saint Wendelin's has served as a spiritual refuge, opening its doors to any soul in search of guidance and peace.

The ministry of Saint Wendelin's began in 1903, originally serving the Slovak community of Cleveland's near west side. On May 3rd of that same year, the community received permission to found Saint Wendelin Parish. A small church was soon constructed and on December 6, 1903, Father Koudelka celebrated Saint Wendelin's first mass. Not long after, the Sisters of Notre Dame established Saint Wendelin's School. The order would continue to provide quality Catholic education for the next seventy years.

In 1925, the current church and school complex was dedicated. Always reaching outward, Saint Wendelin's welcomes all believers to join

in worship. It is a testament to the Saint Wendelin ministry that Catholics from all corners of the city heed the call to celebrate at the little church on Columbus Avenue.

Cleveland's vital tradition of Catholic education is reflected at Saint Wendelin's with their active participation in the Urban Community School. Saint Wendelin's facilities serve as a second home to over 300 students of Urban Community School.

My fellow colleagues, please join me in honor and recognition of every member of Saint Wendelin Church, and its leaders—Pastor Jerome Lajack and Deacon James J. Armstrong, as they celebrate mass with Bishop Anthony Pilla in commemoration of one hundred years of service to God and community. Saint Wendelin parish continues its dedication to social justice and spiritual healing—within the neighborhoods of Ohio City, and the world community beyond.

**IN RECOGNITION OF DOMINIC
POLIMENI WHO RETIRES AFTER
13 YEARS OF DEDICATED AND
DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AS
CITY COUNCIL MEMBER FOR THE
CITY OF SAN GABRIEL**

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 26, 2003

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Dominic Polimeni who will retire from the San Gabriel City Council after 13 years of service to the city and community.

Born May 23, 1940, in Dunmore, PA, Dominic Polimeni was raised and educated in Buffalo, NY. He attended the University of Buffalo and graduated from Bryant and Stratton Business Institute. A 31-year resident of San Gabriel, Mayor Polimeni was elected to the San Gabriel City Council in April, 1990.

Reflecting a team spirit approach and courteous respect for others, Mayor Polimeni's example encouraged a cohesive city council whose collective objective is to put San Gabriel first in order to accomplish community and regional goals.

Dominic Polimeni's city council highlights include building municipal economic reserves, creation of an Economic Redevelopment Agency, revitalization of the historic San Gabriel Mission District, implementation of the \$5 million Millennium Miles Program to rehabilitate San Gabriel's streets, seismic and ADA retrofitting of City Hall, restoration of the legendary San Gabriel Civic Auditorium, the three-acre Smith Park Expansion Project, created ordinances and supported public safety and other department programs to improve the quality of life for San Gabriel residents.

An active member of the San Gabriel community, he has supported and participated in the creation of exciting, fun-filled programs and events to educate and communicate the unique story that is San Gabriel and celebrate San Gabriel's diversity such as the Alhambra-San Gabriel Lunar New Year Parade and Festival, Christmas in April, Three-day San Gabriel Birthday & Festival, California History Day, Mission District Mercado, National Night Out, and Kids Day.

Dominic Polimeni retired from the County of Los Angeles as Administrator of Alhambra Municipal Court in 1996 after a distinguished career spanning 36 years. Mayor Polimeni and